

The Civil Service Examiner

"The Civil Service Department, treats all customers with integrity, courtesy and respect, and provides quality candidates that reflect our diverse community through a fair and timely employment process."

Layoffs have been on every City employee's mind lately, but how much do you really know about it? Civil Service answers some basic questions about the layoff process.

Questions and Answers

Layoffs

What is a layoff?

According to the Civil Service Rules and Regulations, a layoff is a "removal from City employment, reassignment to a former classification, reduction from full-time to part-time status or permanent assignment to another classification in order to avoid layoff."

What can cause a layoff?

The Civil Service Rules and Regulations gives each 'appointing authority' (City Manager, Civil Service Commission, Harbor Commission, and Water Commission) the authority to eliminate any department, bureau, division or any positions under their direct jurisdiction "for reasons of economy or due to a lack of work or funds". If this action causes an employee to be laid off, the appointing authority must specify to the Civil Service Commission the number and classification(s) of the employees to be laid off, and the department, bureau and division in which the layoff is to be made

What is an Order of Layoff?

This is NOT an order to layoff someone. The Civil Service Commission shall, based on the calculated seniority of all employees in the affected classifications, determine the order and the particular employees to be laid off and will provide the list to the appointing authority. This is called an Order of Layoff.

The President's Corner

*By Herbert A. Levi,
Civil Service Commission President*

As your newly elected President of the Civil Service Commission, I welcome our new volunteer Commissioner, **Ahmed Saafir**. We look forward to his active participation in the tasks of the Commission.

The Commission thanks our outgoing President, **Patti Eyres**, for her outstanding leadership. We benefited greatly from her wisdom.

The Commission looks forward to the many challenges that lie ahead in the declining budget cycle. With our outstanding staff we shall give our best and we shall prevail.

What is seniority and how is it calculated?

Seniority in a layoff is calculated as all time spent in your current classification and in all former classifications from which you may be sequentially laid off, without regard to grade level designations, or overall length of City service. The Civil Service Department staff, in support of the Civil Service Commission, computes seniority calculations to determine the order of layoff.

How does Civil Service determine the order of who gets laid off?

Who gets laid off is based upon the seniority of the employees affected. Seniority is compared first at the bureau level, then the department and then all City departments. When a position is eliminated, the seniority of the employee who is to be laid off is **compared to others in that classification**.

If there are other employees **in the same bureau** who have less seniority, then the employee with the least seniority is laid off. The employee whose position was eliminated then transfers to the position of that employee who is laid off. In other words, that employee "bumps" the least senior person.

If the employee in the eliminated position has less seniority than others in the same classification in that bureau, or if there are no other positions in that bureau, the seniority comparison moves to the **department** level. If there are other employees in that department who have less seniority, then the employee with the least seniority is laid off. The employee whose position was eliminated then transfers to the position of that employee who is laid off.

If the employee in the eliminated position has less seniority than others in the same classification in that department or if there are no other positions in that department, then the seniority comparison is done at the final level, **all City departments**. If there are other employees in the City who have less seniority, then the employee with the least seniority is laid off. The employee whose position was eliminated then transfers to the position of that employee who is laid off.

More Layoff Q & A on Page 3!

Spotlight on Our New Commissioner

A lifetime in the community prepared Ahmed Saafir for the challenges of the Civil Service Commission

Ahmed Saafir was appointed to the Civil Service Commission on July 7, 2004. No stranger to public service, he is well known for his community service and serves as a director on various nonprofit groups and organizations.

Commissioner Saafir, along with his wife of thirty-eight years, **Bernice**, is a long-time Long Beach resident. He has seven children and twenty-eight grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. He attended both Long Beach City College and Long Beach State University and was involved in the student movement while in college. Commissioner Saafir, a self-employed businessman, is the proprietor/administrator of a state licensed adult residential facility.

Commissioner Saafir's community involvement highlights are several including roles as a past President of the Long Beach Branch of the NAACP, Vice-Chairman of the California Conservation Corps, and First President of the Long Beach Black Chamber of Commerce. Currently, Commissioner Saafir is Treasurer of the Long Beach Central Area Association, Chairman of the Board for Magjid Al-Shareef of Long Beach, Board Member of the South Coast Interfaith Council, and



"I'm excited to take on the position. I'm hoping I can bring a sense of fairness to the Commission and help to ensure that the standards of merit are upheld."

President of the Long Beach Community Improvement League.

Commissioner Saafir is looking forward to his role on the Commission - "I'm excited to take on the position. I'm hoping I can bring a sense of fairness to the Commission and help to ensure that the standards of merit are upheld."

The Long Beach Civil Service Board of Commissioners and the Civil Service Department staff are happy to welcome Commissioner Saafir and wish him good luck with his appointment to the Commission.



Message from the Executive Director

Mario R. Beas

For the first time in four years the Civil Service Department in cooperation with the Fire Department conducted a major outreach recruitment and examination for entry-level Fire Recruit. In April 2004, after an extensive six-week recruitment campaign, over 5,600 Fire Recruit job candidates filled the Long Beach Convention Center and took the Fire Recruit examination. The examination was a newly designed, state of the art video scenario based test that measured critical skills essential to becoming a successful Firefighter. This innovative exam process replaced the traditional written exam and oral interview processes, and it was completed ten weeks sooner than previous Fire Recruit exams. The final result was a hiring list of 3,490 highly qualified job candidates, and a combined savings of \$69,000 to the Civil Service and Fire departments.

I wish to thank the entire Civil Service Department for its tireless work on developing the new video scenario exam, its relentless and extensive outreach efforts to attract quality job candidates, and for the excellent teamwork it demonstrated at the Convention Center during the examination. Employees from nine other departments assisted at the examinations.

A special thank you to **Leah Salgado**, Personnel Analyst, for administering the examination. Everyone performed at an exceptionally high level. This success could not have been realized without the commitment and dedicated work of the Fire Department. Special recognition must be given to former Fire Chief **Terry Harbour** and Deputy Chief **Brad Wilson** for their support.

In late June, the City Council appointed a new Civil Service Commissioner to replace **Lynne Joy Rogers**. On behalf of the Civil Service Department staff, welcome to Mr. **Ahmed Saafir**. He comes to the Civil Service Commission with a long history of community service to the residents of Long Beach. His commitment to our community will serve him well as a Commissioner. The Civil Service Department looks forward to supporting him.

Finally, this month Commission President **Patti Eyres** resigned from her post after serving for one year. I wish to thank Patti for her leadership and guidance over the past 12 months. Her extensive knowledge of Human Resources issues is a real asset to the Commission. Good luck to newly appointed Commission President **Herb Levi** and Vice President **Mary Islas**.

Have a wonderful summer.

More Questions and Answers

Layoffs

What happens to the employee who is laid off?

Any employee who is laid off is placed on a **priority list** for that classification, which gives them preference when a position in that classification becomes vacant.

If I am laid off and I have prior experience in another classification in the City, can I go back to my old job?

If an employee is laid off from his/her current classification and he/she had acquired permanent status (passed probation) in another classification, they will automatically revert to this former classification. Reversionary rights are to **classifications only**, without regard to grade level or position held previously. If this reversion occurs, another "bumping" process will take place for that classification.

What if there is a vacancy in the classification in which layoffs are to occur?

If there is a vacancy in the classification at the time of the layoff, somewhere in the City, the employee whose position was eliminated shall be transferred to that vacant position.

How is an employee notified about a layoff? Can a layoff be protested or appealed?

The department must personally notify any affected employee, at least three days in advance of the pending layoff. The employee has the right to protest the layoff to the Civil Service Commission within 10 days of receipt of the notice of layoff.

What can affect my seniority?

Any unpaid leave, such as, a suspension, unauthorized leave, authorized leave or a leave of absence, can affect your seniority. Sick leave and vacation time do not affect your seniority. Seniority is calculated for time spent in classified positions only. Any time spent in a non-career or unclassified position does not count towards your seniority.

What happens if I have the same amount of seniority as someone else, who would get laid off?

If two or more employees have the same seniority, the person who placed the lowest on the eligible list would be laid off. If two or more employees occupy the same placement on the eligible list, the person to be laid off would be determined by the order in which their applications were filed. The person among those who tied, who applied last, would be laid off.

If you have more questions about layoffs, please contact Herman Long, Deputy Director of Civil Service at 570-6785 or helong@longbeach.gov

Can I be bumped more than once?

It is possible that you could be bumped more than once depending on how many employees are involved in the layoff, the different classifications involved, the number of classifications you have held and your own seniority. When the order of layoff is generated all of the different "bumping" processes are completed, so that the final order of layoff indicates where all affected employees should go, no matter how many times they may have been bumped.

If I am bumped into a new position, will I get the same pay and will I work the same hours/shift?

Layoffs and reversions affect classifications, without regard to grades. If you get bumped, there is no guarantee your new position will be at the same grade or step, so it is possible that you may be paid less. It is also possible that the working hours for the new position may be different from your old position or you could be reduced from full-time to part-time.

Can someone in a higher grade be laid off before someone in a lower grade?

Depending on seniority **in the classification**, someone who is in a higher grade could be laid off. Again, layoffs and reversions are by classifications, without regard to grade.

If I am in a Reassignment for Training, am I protected from a layoff?

When you are in a reassignment for training, you do not change classifications. If a layoff occurs in your classification, you could be affected. However, because you are in a reassignment, it may provide you other options if you are actually laid off.

I used to work for the City then I resigned to work elsewhere. I was later re-hired by the City. Does my earlier City time count towards my seniority?

When an employee leaves City service, he/she loses all seniority. If that employee returns to City service, his/her seniority is calculated from the time they returned; their prior service is NOT counted towards seniority.

What is selective certification and how does it affect who gets laid off?

Selective certification is used to fill positions in a classification that have special requirements, such as, being bilingual. After approval by the Civil Service Commission, only the names of candidates who meet that particular requirement are given to a department for selection to that position. If an employee was hired by selective certification, they are not included in a normal order of layoff with the rest of the positions in the classification. Employees hired by selective certification can only be laid off if there is an approved order of layoff specifying the elimination of "selective certification" employees.

Putting Our New Faces Forward

A New Public Counter and New Staff Bring Positive Change

When departing the elevator on the 7th floor, it is now even easier for our customers to recognize that they are in the Civil Service Department. The counter and lobby areas have been painted and redecorated with our name, both our department and City logos, and pictures of our Civil Service Commissioners. The beautification committee, which includes: **Christina Winting**, Recruitment Officer; **Melinda George**, Personnel Analyst; and **Bea Lacerda**, Payroll/Personnel Assistant; coordinated the work. Their efforts began three years ago, when the front counter was moved outward toward the lobby and new cubicles were installed for our employment information counter staff. The committee is still hard at work and in the future you will see further improvements including two new bulletin boards in the lobby of City Hall. One bulletin board will provide Civil Service Commission information such as agendas and hearings. The other will provide general Civil Service Department information. Thank you, Christina, Melinda and Bea for continuing to do such an outstanding job!



Improvements to the public counter include: the Civil Service Commission logo, pictures of the commissioners and the City of Long Beach logo.

Complementing the front counter face-lift are two bright and smiling faces! **Russ Ficker**, Clerk Typist, began his career with the City in March 2001. He worked in the Department of Parks, Recreation & Marine as a non-career Clerk and subsequently transferred as a permanent full-time Clerk Typist to the Harbor Department in December 2001. He was promoted and transferred to the Employment Services Division of the Civil Service Department in July 2002. Russ grew up in



Elaine Bailey provides service to a prospective applicant with her usual smile. With new signs and more room, the public counter is even more customer-friendly.

Arizona and earned a bachelor's degree in Exercise Science from Northern Arizona University. With his educational background, it is easy to understand his energetic life style and how much he enjoys surfing, skateboarding and off road racing.

Elaine Bailey, Clerk Typist, is the newest member of the Employment Services Division. She joined the Civil Service Department on March 1, 2004. Elaine previously worked at Scan Health Plan in Long Beach as an Administrative Assistant. At Scan she worked primarily with senior citizens and provided them with health care information. Elaine was born and raised in Long Beach where she graduated from Millikan High School and attended Long Beach City College. She devotes much of her free time to sharing soccer activities with her two children, **Marissa**, who is 15 and **Daniel**, who is 12. Elaine enjoys an active social life with her family and friends while still managing to make time for another favorite activity – shopping!

Russ and Elaine are both outgoing, friendly people who enjoy working with the public. They are the first point of contact for our customers and they possess the enthusiasm and the skill to effectively serve them. The Civil Service Department appreciates their hard work and is grateful for their positive and professional attitudes.

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Thanks to the following staff for their contributions to this edition:

Mario Beas
Ken Bott
Chris Daclan
Diane Dzodin
Commissioner Herbert Levi
Robert Pfingsthorn



Apply Online!

<http://www.longbeach.gov/civilservice>

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